CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. 1. A system for performing a candidate-initiated background check and
2. verification, the system comprising:

3. a search module adapted to issue a candidate-initiated query to one or more
4. databases storing information associated with various potential candidates,
5. so as to assess the candidate's acceptability for a particular engagement
6. based on at least one of a background check and verification of information
7. provided by the candidate; and

8. a report generation module configured to generate a report that includes query
9. results provided by the search module, the results indicating the candidate's
10. acceptability for the particular engagement, wherein the report can be
11. selectively viewed by a potential engaging party and further includes at
12. least one section where the candidate can annotate the results.

1. 2. The system of claim 1 wherein the candidate is a job seeker, the potential
2. engaging party is a potential employer having a pre-defined set of criteria for persons the
3. employer is willing to hire, and the particular engagement is employment with the
4. employer.

1. 3. The system of claim 1 wherein the candidate is a date seeker that is using a
2. dating service, the potential engaging party is a person having a pre-defined set of criteria
3. for date seekers that person is willing to date, and the particular engagement is a date with
4. that person.

1. 4. The system of claim 1 wherein the candidate-initiated background check
2. and verification is performed online, and the candidate accesses the system via the Internet
3. to initiate the issuing of the query.

1   5.   The system of claim 4 wherein the candidate-initiated background check

2 and verification is performed in the context of an online job search service or an online

3 dating service.

1   6.   The system of claim 1 further comprising the one or more databases storing

2 information associated with various potential candidates, wherein the one or more

3 databases are local to the system, thereby enabling rapid query-based searching.

1   7.   The system of claim 6 wherein the one or more local databases are stocked

2 at least in part by data crawler applications that search targeted remote databases.

1   8.   The system of claim 1 further comprising the one or more databases storing

2 information associated with various potential candidates, wherein the one or more

3 databases are remote to the system.

1   9.   The system of claim 1 further comprising:

2 a candidate data intake module configured to prompt the candidate to provide

3   personal information needed to execute the query, the personal information

4   including at least one of the candidate's name, social security number, date

5   of birth, and current address.

1   10.   The system of claim 1 wherein the search module includes at least one of an

2 address history search module for searching for the candidate's address history, a civil

3 record search module for searching for civil action records associated with the candidate, a

4 criminal record search module for searching for criminal records associated with the

5 candidate, and a social security verification module for verifying the candidate's social

6 security number.

1   11.   The system of claim 10 wherein the search module further includes one or

2 more display modules, each configured to enable display of at least a portion of the results

3 included in the report.

1   12.   The system of claim 1 wherein the report generation module is further

2 configured to assign the candidate a unique identification number and seal that are

3   associated with the candidate, where the seal indicates that the report is available, and the

4   unique identification number allows the potential engaging party to access the report.

1   13.   The system of claim 1 wherein the report is associated with an expiration

2   date.

1   14.   A system for performing a candidate-initiated background check and

2   verification, the system comprising:

3   a local database stocked with information relevant to various potential candidates,

4   wherein the information enables at least one of background checks and

5   verification to be performed so as to pre-screen a candidate's acceptability

6   for a particular engagement;

7   one or more search modules communicatively coupled with the database, each

8   search module configured to issue a candidate-initiated query to the

9   database to assess the candidate's acceptability for the particular

10   engagement;

11   a report generation module configured to generate a report that includes query

12   results provided by the one or more search modules, the results indicating

13   the candidate's acceptability for the particular engagement, and the report is

14   associated with a unique identification number that allows the potential

15   engaging party to access the report.

1   15.   The system of claim 14 wherein the report generation module is further

2   configured to associate the report with a seal that is placed on at least one of the

3   candidate's resume, application, online dating service file, or advertising, and the seal

4   indicates to the potential engaging party that the report is available.

1   16.   The system of claim 14 wherein the report is associated with an expiration

2   date.

1   17.   A method for performing a candidate-initiated background check and

2   verification, the method comprising:

3   issuing a candidate-initiated query to one or more databases storing information

4   associated with various potential candidates, so as to assess the candidate's

5   acceptability for a particular engagement based on at least one of a

6   background check and verification of information provided by the

7   candidate;

8   generating a report that includes results of the candidate-initiated query, the results

9   indicating the candidate's acceptability for the particular engagement; and

10   allowing the candidate to review and annotate the report prior to any selective

11   viewing by a potential engaging party.

1   18.   The method of claim 17 wherein the candidate is a job seeker, the potential

2 engaging party is a potential employer having a pre-defined set of criteria for persons the

3 employer is willing to hire, and the particular engagement is employment with the

4 employer.

1   19.   The method of claim 17 wherein the candidate is a date seeker that is using

2 a dating service, the potential engaging party is a person having a pre-defined set of criteria

3 for date seekers that person is willing to date, and the particular engagement is a date with

4 that person.

1   20.   The method of claim 17 wherein the candidate-initiated background check

2 and verification is performed online, and issuing the candidate-initiated query is triggered

3 in response to the candidate providing input via the Internet.

1   21.   The method of claim 17 wherein the candidate-initiated background check

2 and verification is performed in the context of an online job search service or an online

3 dating service.

1   22.   The method of claim 17 further comprising storing the information

2 associated with various potential candidates in one or more local databases, thereby

3 enabling rapid query-based searching.

23.   The method of claim 22 further comprising stocking the one or more local databases at least in part using data crawler applications that search targeted remote databases.

24.   The method of claim 17 wherein issuing the candidate-initiated query to one or more databases includes accessing one or more remote databases.

25.   The method of claim 17 further comprising prompting the candidate to provide personal information needed to execute the query, the personal information including at least one of the candidate's name, social security number, date of birth, and current address.

26.   The method of claim 17 wherein issuing the candidate-initiated query to one or more databases further includes at least one of searching for the candidate's address history, searching for civil action records associated with the candidate, searching for criminal records associated with the candidate, and verifying the candidate's social security number.

27.   The method of claim 17 further comprising assigning the candidate a unique identification number that allows the potential engaging party to access the report.

28.   The method of claim 17 further comprising associating the report with an expiration date.

29.   The method of claim 17 further comprising associating the report with a seal that is placed on at least one of the candidate's resume, application, online dating service file, or advertising, wherein the seal indicates to the potential engaging party that the report is available.

30.   The method of claim 17 further comprising allowing the potential engaging party to review the report in response to the candidate releasing the report for review.

1   31.   The method of claim 17 further comprising allowing the potential engaging
2   party to sanction additional reports relevant to the candidate in response to the candidate's
3   approval.

1   32.   The method of claim 17 further comprising notifying the candidate that the
2   report has expired if an expiration date associated with report has passed.

1   33.   The method of claim 32 further comprising recertifying the report in
2   response to the candidate affirmatively responding to the notifying.

1   34.   The method of claim 17 further comprising periodically recertifying the
2   report to prevent engagement based on stale data.

1   35.   The method of claim 17 further comprising allowing the potential engaging
2   party to recertify the report in response to approval by the candidate.

1   36.   The method of claim 17 wherein the candidate-initiated background check
2   and verification is performed on-site using a kiosk.

1   37.   A computer readable medium encoded with software, that when executed
2   by a processor, causes the processor to carry out a process for performing a candidate-
3   initiated background check and verification, the process comprising:
4   issuing a candidate-initiated query to one or more databases storing information
5   associated with various potential candidates, so as to assess the candidate's
6   acceptability for a particular engagement based on at least one of a
7   background check and verification of information provided by the
8   candidate;
9   generating a report that includes results of the candidate-initiated query, the results
10   indicating the candidate's acceptability for the particular engagement; and
11   allowing the candidate to review and annotate the report prior to any selective
12   viewing by a potential engaging party.